

GSA CIRCULAR NO. 253
ATTACHMENT 1

PAPER AND PAPERWORK - SELECTED GUIDELINES

Stationery Specifications, Procurement, and Use

1. General. These guidelines cover important standards and requirements concerning the procurement, specifications, and use of blank and printed paper, envelopes, and forms by executive agencies for official Government correspondence.

The guidelines deal with subject matter which was primarily covered by the Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-33, Revised, dated March 9, 1959, now rescinded.

Except where appropriate citations appear, the standards and requirements contained in the guidelines are prescribed by General Services Administration General Regulation No. 27, dated December 13, 1961.

2. Correspondence Practices. The U.S. Government Correspondence Manual, announced by General Services Administration Circular No. 233, dated March 20, 1961, provides a Government-wide guide for correspondence and style practices. Instructions for the efficient and economical use of the various types of paper, envelopes, and forms used in written communications are contained in the manual.
3. Standard Specifications. The color, size, and quality of paper and the color of ink for stationery and standard and optional forms used for Government correspondence are prescribed in the Table of Standard Specifications, attachment A to GSA General Regulation No. 27.
4. Printing Requirements. Embossing or engraving, and the printing of names of officers or officials on stationery are not permitted, except as authorized by the Government Printing and Binding Regulations issued by the Joint Committee on Printing, Congress of the United States. Addresses, telephone numbers, and titles of officers, officials, or offices should not be printed on stationery, as this restricts use and results in obsolete stocks when changes occur.
5. Paper for Correspondence.
 - a. Procurement. Printed letterhead and memorandum stationery are procured from the Government Printing Office or may be reproduced by agency printing plants or office reproduction methods authorized by the Government Printing and Binding Regulations (44 U.S.C. 111).

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- b. Letterhead Stationery. Letterhead stationery is used in formal correspondence where a quality paper identifying the agency is needed. The style and format for letterhead stationery may be selected by the ordering agency provided they meet standard specifications and printing requirements.
- c. Memorandum Stationery. Memorandum stationery is on paper of less expensive quality and easily distinguishable from letterhead stationery. It is used, when suitable, for informal intra-agency and interagency communications, including agency-numbered forms and form letters. It is also used for correspondence with State and local government agencies in the administration of cooperative programs, and for other informal correspondence. It is used where Optional Form 10, United States Government Memorandum, does not adequately serve agency needs. (See paragraph 7c.)

Memorandum stationery contains the masthead "United States Government Memorandum" at the top left half of the sheet in the area, and in the style of printing, as shown in attachment A of GSA General Regulation No. 27. Where reproduction facilities do not permit this style, the masthead may be in typewriter style.

Printing of the agency name is optional; when included, the name is placed in the space indicated at the top right. If needed, multiple-address communications and designated fill-in spaces may be arranged and printed on memorandum stationery to facilitate transmittal and reference. The form may be designed for multiple-address communications and use in window envelopes.

- d. Continuation Sheets. Printing is not authorized on continuation sheets used with either letterhead or memorandum stationery.
- e. Manifold (tissue) Sheets. Manifold sheets, commonly called tissues, are used in making carbon copies. Tissues containing printed letterhead are used in making carbon copies that are sent outside the agency when identification of the agency is necessary. The printing is in the same format and ink color as used on letterheads. Printing is not authorized on tissues used for internal copies of correspondence, including continuation sheets. The U.S. Government Correspondence Manual recommends the use of yellow tissue for "official file" copies. Other distinctive colors may be used for internal reference file purposes.

6. Envelopes (Mailing).

- a. Printing. Agency identification or address, the penalty or postage and fees paid clause, and the designation "official business" are printed in either black or blue ink.

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Borders, markings, slogans, or designs are not to be printed on mailing envelopes except when specifically approved by the General Services Administration and in conformity with postal laws and regulations. As a general policy, both to reduce costs and to prevent undue publicizing of some activities of the Government in contrast to others, the use of borders, markings, slogans, or designs to support an agency or its program is not authorized in any form, whether printed, stamped, or otherwise affixed.

- b. Procurement. Printed envelopes, including air mail, are procured under the terms of Federal Supply Schedule contracts of the General Services Administration. The General Services Administration may authorize procurement of special sizes and types of envelopes, but agency requirements should be limited to the sizes and types available under the Federal Supply Schedule. Blank envelopes for use in the District of Columbia are procured from the Government Printing Office, as required by statute (44 U.S.C. 225); when used outside the District they may be procured from Federal Supply Schedule contracts.
- c. Window Envelopes. The use of window envelopes is recommended by the U.S. Government Correspondence Manual. Positive typing economies can be achieved through the use of these envelopes.

7. Optional and Standard Forms

- a. Format. The current format for each of the optional and standard forms described below is prescribed in attachment A to GSA General Regulation No. 27, dated December 13, 1961.
- b. Procurement. Current forms are procured from the Federal Supply Service, General Services Administration. Existing stocks of old Standard Forms 63, 64, and 65 and Optional Form 10 are to be used until supplies are exhausted.
- c. Optional Form 10, United States Government Memorandum. This form is designed to facilitate informal intra- or interagency correspondence, including correspondence with State and local government agencies in the administration of cooperative programs. It provides spaces for the insertion of names or identification of addressee and sender along with description of subject matter and date, following the format of discontinued Standard Form 64. Optional Form 10 is printed without agency name. It is intended for use by those agencies whose needs are met by a simple format and whose requirements, if any, for the agency name or special fill-in data on memorandum stationery do not justify a special printing.
- d. Standard Form 63, Memorandum of Call. This form serves as notification of an incoming telephone call or of a visitor when the person called or visited is not available. It also is used in referring a visitor to an appropriate person.

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- e. Standard Form 65, U.S. Government Messenger Envelope. This form is for repetitive use in transmitting communications and printed matter between offices within the same city. Consecutive spaces are provided for inserting the name and address for the current transmittal. The "Stop" number space is used primarily in the Washington, D.C., area but may be used elsewhere, if appropriate.

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PAPER AND PAPERWORK - SELECTED GUIDELINES

Suggested Mailing Practices

1. General. These guidelines cover mailing practices which, if followed, will expedite mail handling and provide economies in mail operations. The Post Office Department has prepared these guidelines as an aid to agencies in establishing efficient and economical mailing procedures.

The guidelines deal with subject matter originally included as an appendix to Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-33, Revised, dated March 9, 1959, now rescinded.

2. Preparation of Mail. The following guidelines should be observed in preparing mail in order to expedite Post Office Department handling:
 - a. Official matter in the form of letter mail, or other matter classified as first class when mailed by the public, is given the same preferential treatment accorded first class mail and should be sacked or presented separately from mail that is not entitled to preferential treatment. Quantity mailings should be tied with all addresses facing the same way. Ten or more letters for the same city or State should be tied together. Individual large pieces of first-class mail which are not sacked separately should be marked "First Class."
 - b. Printed and other official matter which has the characteristics of the second, third, or fourth class, when mailed by the public, is treated in the manner in which mail of these classes is handled. Articles weighing in excess of four pounds, which under the law are chargeable with postage at the fourth class rate, should also be presented separately.
 - c. If expeditious delivery is essential for parcels of books, printed matter, and other matter not having the characteristics of first class mail, special delivery or special handling services should be used.
 - d. Mail sacks for quantity mailing and labels for identifying the contents may be obtained from the local post office.
 - e. To the extent practicable, daily mailings to the same addressee should be consolidated.
3. Use of Postal Delivery Zone Numbers.
 - a. Zone numbers should be used in addressing mail to cities for which numbered zones have been established and in return addresses on

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envelopes, letterheads and other stationery, and publications when office addresses are shown.

- b. Applications, questionnaires, and other forms which contain spaces for inserting addresses should also contain the word "zone" or "zone number" and space for the insertion of zone numbers.
 - c. Zone numbers should also be used in mailing lists for addressees in zoned cities. Post offices at zoned cities will add zone numbers to mailing lists without charge.
 - d. Zone directories for use in ascertaining the zone number of a specific address are furnished by the Postal Service without charge. A local directory may be obtained from the postmaster of a zoned city. Out-of-town directories should be requested from the Office of Headquarters Services, Post Office Department, Washington 25, D.C. Information about the zoning system not available at local post offices may be obtained from the Delivery Services Division, Bureau of Operations, Post Office Department, Washington 25, D.C.
4. Registered and Certified Mail. Registered mail should be used only where required by statute, or where the matter being mailed warrants a record covering transit as well as delivery. The registry service should not be used for the purpose of collecting indemnity in the event of loss or damage, but for the greater security of mail that needs this protection. In other instances where the mailing and delivery records are essential, certified mail should be used. In those cases where agency regulations require the use of registered mail, each agency should determine whether the use of certified mail would accomplish the objective of the regulation, and should, where appropriate and otherwise legally permissible, change the regulation.

Following is a comparison of characteristics of registered and certified mail:

<u>Registered Mail</u>	<u>Certified Mail</u>
Must be securely sealed. Additional sealing devices may be used but not over intersections of sealing flaps on envelopes.	Must be sealed. No restriction on additional sealing devices.
Mailing receipt furnished sender by post office. For multiple transactions, sender prepares receipt using post office forms. Sender always furnished authenticated mailing receipt.	Mailing receipt prepared by sender. Sender may present mail and receipt for authentication (postmarking) of the mailing receipt. If postmarked receipt not needed, mail may be deposited in ordinary mail drops.

<u>Registered Mail</u> (Cont'd)	<u>Certified Mail</u> (Cont'd)
Complete mailing record kept at the post office.	No record kept at the post office.
Sender's return receipt service. (Optional)	Same.
Restricted delivery service to addressee only. (Optional)	Same.
Recorded in transit and separated from other mail. Receives additional security if warranted.	Not recorded in transit. Handled with ordinary first class mail without separation.
Controlled at post office of address by individual charge-out to delivering employees.	Charged to carriers in bulk. Carriers identify mail by endorsement and then follow delivery rule governing registered mail.
Delivery receipt obtained from addressee or his representative; receipt retained at post office for 2 years.	Same.
Postal indemnity provided, subject to limitations of Government Losses in Shipment Act (5 U.S.C. 134, 134a-h) if value declared and fee for value paid. Postal indemnity not paid for articles mailed under "Postage and Fees Paid" reimbursement arrangements.	Service limited to matter having no intrinsic value. No indemnity provided.
<p>5. <u>Use of Envelopes.</u> Consideration should be given to the following factors in selecting the size of envelopes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use standard-size envelopes whenever possible, folding the contents when necessary and feasible. Effective January 1, 1963, envelopes less than 3 inches in width (height) or 4 1/4 inches in length are nonmailable. After that date envelopes must be rectangular in shape and a ratio of width (height) to length of less than 1 to 1.414 (1 to the square root of 2) is not recommended. b. Use large flat envelopes only for multiple enclosures, thick pamphlets, books, and other bulky material. <p>Avoid use of oversize envelopes for heavy pieces of printed matter since the contents frequently become damaged by shifting during course of handling.</p>	

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6. Use of "Self-Mailer." The elimination of envelopes by preparing matter in the form of a so-called "self-mailer" is permissible under the following conditions:
 - a. The pieces should be folded flat, including those made up in State bundles. Pieces should be fastened by a small sticker or a single wire stitch or staple on the longest open edge. The edges need not be fastened when a number of pieces, all having the same post office in the addresses, are placed in a bundle.
 - b. A clear rectangular space, not less than 2 3/4 by 4 inches, should be provided on the "self-mailer" for return address, penalty or other postage indicia, name and address of addressee, postal endorsements, and other pertinent matter. If practical, pieces should be folded to letter size to aid distribution by postal employees.
 - c. Effective January 1, 1963 "self-mailers" less than 3 inches in width (height) or 4 1/4 inches in length are nonmailable. After that date "self-mailers" must be rectangular in shape and a ratio of width (height) to length of less than 1 to 1.414 (1 to the square root of 2) is not recommended.
7. Reply Cards, Envelopes or Labels Bearing Penalty or Postage and Fees Paid Clause and Return Address. These may be enclosed in mail to individuals or firms from whom official information is desired, except where the information to be furnished is primarily in the interest of the respondents. They may not be furnished to bidders or contractors, or to enable individuals or firms to send to the Government without payment of postage, reports, etc., which they are required by law to submit. Preaddressed reply labels furnished to contractors for the delivery of official matter to an agency must have the endorsement for any special service such as air mail, special delivery, insurance, etc., preprinted.
8. New Type Mailing Pieces. When an agency plans to prepare large quantities of mailing pieces which are not of standard form or design, a sample should be submitted to the Classification and Special Services Division, Bureau of Operations, Post Office Department, Washington 25, D.C. When prepared at a field office the sample should be submitted to the local postmaster.